

## MICHIGAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS & SCHOOL RELATED PERSONNEL

American Federation of Teachers · AFL-CIO

Date:

March 15, 2005

To:

Senate Education Committee

From:

Louise Somalski

Subject:

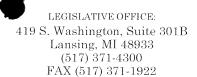
Education Flexibility & Empowerment Law (House Bills 4079 and 4080)

Under House Bills 4079 and 4080, a school district could apply to the state superintendent of public instruction for a contract that would allow the school district to waive state and federal rules and laws in exchange for a certain level of performance by the district.

The Michigan Federation of Teachers and School Related Personnel strongly oppose these bills because:

- ► This legislation leaves waiver authority up to one person in one department.
- These waivers are too broad with unforseen consequences.
- ► The Michigan Department of Education is already understaffed with no ability for oversight.
- ► **Automatic approval** after 60 days if no Michigan Department of Education response is received by the district is unwise.
- Districts already have wide discretion to tailor their programs under current laws and regulations.
- The history of special education rule waivers has resulted in: increased class size; increased teacher staffing ratios; and increased maximum case loads.

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